

THE TWELFTH DAY.

11th March, 1924.

The Assembly met at 11. 30 A. M. on Tuesday, the 11th March, 1924.

Rao Bahadur R. Viraraghava Aiyangar, Officer in charge of the Administration, presided.

VIII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

141. Taxes imposed on the merchants of Nagercoil.

Mr. Ramasubbuz Sivatanu Chettiyar (Member, Trading Classes, Nagercoil) complained about the several taxes imposed on the merchants of Nagercoil. He said that merchants were liable to pay the following taxes at Nagercoil:—

1. Sirkar tax on the lands on which buildings stood and municipal tax for the same.
2. Income tax and municipal tax on house property.
3. Income tax on profits from business.
4. Municipal tax on carts and bullocks employed for transporting goods to the market.
5. Fees in respect of goods taken to the market for sale.
6. Private scavenging fees in towns.
7. Tolls on carriages going beyond town limits.
8. Profession tax to the Municipality.

Besides these, the people were subject to further liabilities in the shape of fine and prohibitory assessment on encroachments alleged to have been made by them near their registered holdings. The Member said that the merchants were subjected to many and heavy burdens of taxation; and in view to relieve them of their burden to some extent, he suggested that at least profession tax and the prohibitory assessment, etc., imposed on alleged encroachments, might be done away with.

President's reply.—As regards most of the points referred to by you, your Municipality has to be approached.

Member.—An amount equal to 5 years' assessment is levied on persons occupying *poramboke* lands.

President.—Ordinarily, in these matters, if the occupation is not objectionable, the land is either registered or leased to the occupant. It is only when the occupation is objectionable that fine and prohibitory assessment are levied and the occupant is evicted from the land. In such cases, the prohibitory assessment leviable will be a multiple not exceeding five times the ordinary *taram* assessment for the portion encroached upon and this will be fixed according to the discretion of the deciding officer in each individual case.

142. Disabilities of Ezhavas and the so-called backward classes.

Mr. P. K. Raman (Member, Nominated) began by saying that Ezhava pupils were even to-day unable to secure admission in a few schools—Government as well as aided. He then submitted that notice boards prohibiting the passage of certain classes of people along public roads did not serve any useful purpose and that the inscriptions on those boards were not only meaningless, but also likely to result in a breach of the peace. Those notice boards were also inconveniencing the student population, especially when a school was near a temple. The Member observed that prohibition often entailed on the members of his community serious inconvenience in representing their grievances to the officers of the Government who generally camped within the prohibited areas.

Another point touched upon by the Member was that the nomination of representatives of his community by the Government to the several popular institutions of the State did not produce satisfactory results. The Member urged that they should be given separate electorates as in the case of their brethren in the Madras Presidency and the Cochin State.

President's reply.—You first spoke about the admission of Ezhava boys in to certain schools. Arrangements are already in progress in this matter. Either the schools will be thrown open or they will be removed to convenient sites.

Member.—Our men should also be on the committees constituted for submitting recommendations to throw open schools to all classes of His Highness' subjects.

President.—The matter will be noted.

As regards grant-in-aid schools also, an investigation will be conducted as to whether there are any such schools not open to all classes, and if there are, the necessary action will be taken to remove the disabilities of the communities in that respect.

As regards notice boards prohibiting the free passage of all classes along public roads, I have already given my reply.

143. Abolition of untouchability and removal of boards prohibiting passage through public roads.

Mr. N. R. Krishnan (Member, Nominated) deplored the disabilities to which his community was subjected on account of unapproachability even at the present day and said that, with the spread of education among them and the enjoyment of increased privileges in other directions, those disabilities were being most keenly felt by them. The prohibition imposed upon them in the matter of freely using the public roads opened with the funds in the State treasury, to which his community also contributed, could not be construed in any other light than that of imprisonment. The Member said that the treatment accorded by Europeans to Indian emigrants from India to Kenya would perhaps give some idea of the sufferings of his community. An old Royal Proclamation had declared public roads to be free to all subjects and the springing up of notice boards prohibiting the use of certain roads by certain classes of subjects was not only surprising, but also meaningless. Their condition was the more pitiable, especially when it was remembered that those very roads were open to Mahomedans and Christians. Both Hindus and non-Hindus had urged the removal of such a monstrous disability. The Member suggested the appointment of a committee to enquire into and improve their condition and prayed for the issue of a Proclamation abolishing unapproachability.

President's reply.—As I already replied to a previous speaker, there is no objection to any class of people passing through highways and other public roads. There are, however, certain minor restrictions imposed by custom in a very few localities. Regarding the removal of notice boards, the Dewan has given a reply and I am not in a position to add anything to that reply.

144. Needs of the Kalkulam taluk.

Mr. Aiyappan Pillai Matevan Pillai (Member, Kalkulam taluk) represented that the Government in as early as 1079 accepted the responsibility for imparting primary education to all boys and girls in the State. From the reply to an interpellation in the Legislative Council it was understood that there were 55 *pakuthies* in the whole State which had no primary schools. The Education Expenditure Committee had suggested in their report that there should be two departmental schools in a revenue *pakuthi*, one for boys and another for girls, and that if private efforts were not forthcoming, Government should step in and open schools. If that recommendation of the committee was to be acted upon by the Government, many schools would have to be opened in the *pakuthies* of the Kalkulam taluk. There were no departmental schools either for boys or girls in the *pakuthies* of Kadiyapattanam, Kappiyara and Mekkode. In the Kotanallur *pakuthi* there was only one departmental school for girls and the building in which it was located had been constructed out of funds jointly contributed by the people and the Government. The site for another building for a boys' school had already been purchased and the foundation laid. As the people were not in a position to raise funds to complete the building, both the boys and girls of the village had now to be educated in the girls' school. If the Government could not complete the building for the local boys' school, the building in which the girls' school was housed might be placed at the